



# Supporting sustainable wild harvests and understanding the effects of gathering.

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With thanks to all those who have been involved with supporting the project.



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**SCOTTISH  
NATURAL  
HERITAGE**



# The Sustainable Forest Harvest Project

- Following the recommendation of the 2006 Beaulieu Seminar to develop guidance and procedures on monitoring harvests of NTFPs
- Bringing together groups of species experts, harvesters, buyers, NGOs and government agencies.



# Criteria for inclusion

- Statutory obligations to monitor harvests
- Visibility/scale of harvest
- Controversy over the sustainability of harvesting

# 3 target species/species groups



Fungi – one of our most visible and widespread harvests – and one that we know little about in terms of species harvested and quantities. Not suggesting that the harvest is unsustainable, but recognising the need to promote good practice.



Moss – Statutory obligation to monitor harvesting of Sphagnum under Annex IV of the European Habitats directive.



Lichens – Not currently harvested in any quantity, but very sensitive and requiring clear guidance. Tree Lungwort may soon be listed on Schedule 8 of the WCA and commercial harvesting will have to take place under license.

# Questions to answer

- Why do we need to monitor harvests and what do we hope to achieve?
- What data do we need to collect?
- Who is going to hold that data and how will they analyse it?
- How should we go about collecting the data?

# Approach to sustainable use

- Gathering is a privilege with responsibilities attached.
- Opening dialogue between groups.
- Providing guidance to the sector of harvesters that are receptive to sustainability messages.
- Incorporating harvesting and management guidance into forest certification.



The countryside is a working landscape. Please be aware of safety and follow the countryside and access codes. In accordance with these codes, and as a matter of courtesy, you are advised to ask for permission before you pick mushrooms.

By respecting the natural environment you can help to manage and conserve the countryside.

## The Scottish Wild Mushroom Code

When picking mushrooms for any purpose,  
**please consider the following points overleaf.**

Be aware of your own safety and follow the Scottish  
any wild plant without the permission of the  
and as a matter of courtesy, make sure you receive  
resting requires an agreement with the landowner.

rare species and more than 60% of European  
It are often difficult to identify, the guidelines ask

## The Scottish Moss Collection Code

have not been following these guidelines, please  
report it to your local police and ask to speak to  
the Wildlife Crime Officer.

# The context for sustainability

- The specific sustainability concerns of each harvest, environmental, social and economic.
- The social structures surrounding the use of resources.

# Types of harvesting: Commercial harvesting

1) Under license or by agreement  
e.g. moss.

Solution: Keep it simple

- Monitoring should take place under the terms of the license agreement.  
Standard clause for license agreements.
- Advice for forest managers on choosing sites for harvesting.

# Types of harvesting: Commercial harvesting

2) Without license or agreement.

**High concern:** moss

Criminal element to harvesting.

Grey/black market is very difficult to access.

Solution:

- Study involving analysis of material bought from roadside stalls and of harvested sites.

# Types of harvesting: Commercial harvesting

2) Without license or agreement.

Lower concern: fungi

Solution:

- Keep it simple
- Monitor through fungi buyers.

BUT:

- Wild products are to some extent considered public goods (with a strong element of responsibility attached).
- This situation proves disincentive to managing resources as harvesters are allowed no part and landowners make no gain.

# Types of harvesting: Collecting for personal use.

On a range of scales.

e.g. moss, lichens and fungi

A large and interested audience of gatherers  
= ability to collect more detailed data.

Solutions:

- Moss checklist based on the moss code
- Fungi and lichens monitoring based on Plantlife's Flora Guardians scheme.

# Next steps

- Use the guidance that we have.
- Spread the word.

